

## GRAND CALUMET RIVER RESTORATION FUND COUNCIL

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### PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2003

#### I. Welcome & Introductions - Jim Smith, IDEM

A 9/30 agenda and minutes from the August 2003 meeting were distributed to all present. A welcome to the meeting and introductions of all Grand Calumet River Restoration Fund (GCRRF) Council members present was made. Council members present were Mike Mikulka (US EPA), Wayne Faatz (IDNR), Greg Ellis (IDNR), Dan Sparks (US FWS) and Jim Smith (IDEM). Other IDEM staff present was: Karen Terrell and Richard Harris. Ten members of the public attended the meeting.

#### II. Voluntary Remediation Program - Richard Harris, IDEM

Richard Harris led a discussion of IDEM's voluntary remediation program and provided a handout outlining the basics of the program. He indicated that NIPSCO has approximately 600-700 feet of riverfront along the Grand Calumet River and that they have submitted a proposed work plan for both land and sediment projects to IDEM. IDEM and NIPSCO have gone back and forth a few times regarding changes/additions/etc. to the work plan and there are a number of issues that still need to be resolved. The work plan will not be approved until after public participation has occurred.

Carolyn Marsh requested a copy of the proposed work plan be placed in the Hammond Public Library for review. Mr. Harris indicated that this could happen but to remember that this is not the final work plan.

#### III. Video: Cleanup of a Michigan River & Wetland site - Mike Mikulka

Mr. Mikulka provided information on the cleanup of the Horse Creek and Pine River near Alma, Michigan. The project there has some parallels with the West Branch. These bodies of water were contaminated with metals - specifically chromium and lead. The project is currently ongoing and is expected to wrap up soon. The cost for this cleanup was estimated at between \$8.95 - \$9.61 million (with a minimum expenditure of \$8.1 million) and will last approximately 210 days. Three videos were shown, outlining various stages of the cleanup. The points of the presentation and videos shown were as follows: excavation in the dry is a feasible remediation method and needs to be evaluated for the Grand Cal; water filled bladders were demonstrated as feasible alternatives to coffer dams and sheet piling and

should be seriously considered for the Grand Cal; hydraulic dredging with mechanical dewatering was the most feasible method where water depth was sufficient; and alternatives which are not feasible need to be screened out from further consideration.

One participant asked what "in-situ" meant as this was one of the cleanup options at this site. In-Situ means treatment that would occur in place or within the river rather than removing it and treating it elsewhere.

#### IV. Alternatives development discussion continues - Dr. Jim Smith

A participant asked about designated "hot spots" within the Grand Cal to target for restoration. Dr. Smith stated that the river has been characterized based on numerous studies and will be evaluated beginning within the next month or so to determine "hot spots" in the river based on certain risk factors. It will take several couple months for the evaluation to completed. Dan Sparks stated that he believes the entire stretch from the state line to where US Steel stops dredging will be designated as a hot spot and further that he believes this to be one of the most contaminated water bodies in North America.

Regarding alternatives, Dr. Smith stated that contractors will be looking at different technologies and options and will screen out things that are not feasible. Then the Trustees will consider the remaining options in depth and look further at their feasibility. This process will lead to a proposal of what the Parties believe will work best for the Grand Calumet River.

A participant asked for financial information regarding the Trust Fund. Mary Ann Habeeb has that information. Dr. Smith believes that there is approximately \$7.1 million left in the fund - \$1 million has been spent so far. By the end of the remedial alternatives studies we will have spent about \$1.5 million on the West Branch. Dan Sparks indicates that a full accounting of the fund can be available at the next meeting. He also stated that we pay \$40,000 per year for maintenance of the account to National City Bank.

A participant asked if different alternatives would be considered for different parts of the river? Dr. Smith stated that if it's feasible to do so that would be considered.

There probably won't be any actual remedial projects done for at least one year. Carolyn Marsh asked if we would do a plant/tree/bird inventory study prior to the start of projects. Dr. Smith said that the study would have to directly relate to the project scope for the river in order for the Trust Fund to pay for this expense.

#### V. Next Meeting - Wednesday, October 29, 2003